

The Status of Recycling in Wisconsin Summary: July 2003

In 1990, 1995, and 2000, the Wisconsin DNR hired Franklin Associates, Ltd. to conduct *Waste Characterization and Management Studies* and in 2002 the DNR hired Cascadia Consulting Group, Inc to conduct a *Statewide Waste Characterization Study*. The Franklin studies produced estimates for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) generation, recycling, combustion and landfilling for 26 items; Cascadia produced MSW landfill tonnage estimates for 62 waste categories based on 400 samples from 14 landfills.

DNR used a combination of Cascadia's results and Franklin's 2000 estimates to determine the effectiveness of our recycling and waste diversion efforts. The recycling rates for materials banned from Wisconsin landfills are as follows:

lead acid batteries, major appliances and tires	>95%
yard waste	78%
corrugated cardboard	72%
newspaper	67%
glass containers	57-74%
aluminum & steel cans	~55%
plastic containers	41-51%
magazines	31-35%
office paper	28-57%

Note: Ranges are given when inconsistencies between the two data sets precluded developing a single recycling rate.

DNR calculated a conservative overall landfill diversion rate (recycling + combusted with energy recovery + yard waste managed at home) of 40.4%.

DNR also compared Wisconsin landfill data (based on pounds per capita per year) with Minnesota's and Iowa's. Wisconsin residents throw away much less (-24%) than those in Iowa and only a little more (+3%) than those in Minnesota. Wisconsin is throwing away less than Iowa and Minnesota for all of the banned items except aluminum cans, PETE bottles and HDPE containers.

Wisconsin has a very successful recycling and waste diversion program, and the studies have identified new items in sufficient quantity to be considered for increased diversion efforts. We are looking forward to working with the citizens of Wisconsin to keep Wisconsin's program one of the nation's leaders.